

## House Republican Press Release

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### **House Okays Measure Offered by Rep. Miller for Umbilical Cord Blood Bank Feasibility Study**



A measure offered by state Representative Lawrence G. Miller that could lead to the establishment of an umbilical cord blood bank in Connecticut that would help in the treatment of some forms of cancer and various genetic disorders that affect the blood and immune system received final legislative approval Saturday by the state House of Representatives.

The measure, an amendment to a related bill (Senate Bill 311), was forwarded to Governor M. Jodi Rell to be signed into law, said Representative Miller, R-122<sup>nd</sup> District, who spoke in support of the proposal during debate on the floor of the House.

“Umbilical cord blood is a rich source of stem cells, which can be used to treat blood-related cancers as well as several genetic disorders that affect the blood and immune system,” said Representative Miller, a cancer survivor whose life was prolonged through adult stem cell transplant therapy. “I am personally aware of a number of cancer victims who had been given very little chance of recovery whose lives were prolonged because of treatment they received that involved the use of stem cells derived from umbilical cord blood. The measure we approved today is an important first step in the establishment of a public umbilical cord blood bank, which will help reduce the incidence of cancer in Connecticut.”

“Last year, Governor Rell signed into law a bill authorizing embryonic stem cell research in Connecticut, which set the stage for major scientific breakthroughs in the treatment of cancer and chronic medical conditions. Cancer patients in Connecticut got more good news a few weeks ago with the announcement that an agreement had been reached between the City of New Haven and Yale-New Haven Hospital that gave the hospital the green light to proceed with construction of its planned cancer center. When the governor signs this bill into law, we can look forward to a significant reduction in Connecticut’s cancer rate, which currently is the ninth highest in the United States,” Representative Miller said.

The bill directs the commissioner of public health, in consultation with the Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee, to establish an ad hoc committee concerning a public umbilical cord blood bank in the state. The eight member ad hoc committee will examine and evaluate the feasibility of establishing a public umbilical cord blood bank for collecting and storing umbilical cord blood and placental tissue donated by maternity patients at hospitals in the state; entering into a multi-state public umbilical cord blood

collaboration; and developing a public-private partnership with existing cord blood banks.